/708 cont./

rinses off the baby's entire body. With her hand flat she rubs the parts that she has covered with water and dries them immediately with a ball of *fibe* or with a handful of soft Sphagnum moss. She cleanses the eyes, ears, mouth, and nose with particular care. Now she lays the little one on the furred side of a particularly soft skin, usually fox or otter, on top of which has been strewn a thick layer of down. Wrapped in this, it rests until the mother, too, has washed herself.

Soon after her delivery the gets up from her bed and, /709/ alone or accompanied by the midwife, goes to the shore to wash in sea water. The mother steps into the water as far as possible and rubs herself thoroughly with her hands flat and with a ball of *fibe* or moss. The bath in sea water is regarded as necessary and good, but not a bath in a brook. That is why women do it to this day. The water is always cold, but the Indian women do not shy away from it, and for several days the young mother bathes once or several times a day. Hyades (q) 181 observed "on the same day of her delivery the mother went alone to take four baths in the sea, one each hour, the first one four hours after her delivery" /translated from French/. He was also told by the same women "that all Fuegian women do this after their confinement" /translated from French/ (138). After each bath she dries herself

138. He describes (loc. cit.) very accurately the many details of a woman's bathing and washing. This was in winter. "The temperature of the air was then +1.7 degrees, that of the sea water +6.7 degrees, the wind was strong, ~~north-northwest, 5 meters per second~~" /translated from French/.

well with *fibe* and returns to the hut.

Often when the mother goes down to the water to bathe, she is accompanied by the so-called adopted mother, who carries the newborn baby in her arms. Instead of washing the baby in the manner described above, she dips it into the sea water (139) for a moment

139. Bove (p) 158 reports the following.

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and Dabbene (b):190 repeat it verbatim: "The newborn babies are immediately bathed in the sea; the poor creatures, of course, often pay for this superstition with their lives." Contrary to this latter assertion is the fact, according to the memory of my informants, that not a single newborn child died in this bath. It is held in the water for only a second or two. Other travelers also mention this bath, without definitely describing the real facts. Bridges (a):182, for instance, says: "Children, generally within a few days of their birth, are dipped in the cold sea, from a superstition that it makes them grow well" /cited in English/. Compare Bridges (b):208.

and quickly dries it off with [illegible]. Hurriedly she carries it back to the hut and wraps it well in a soft skin. I was told: "The bath in sea water immediately after delivery is very good for mother and child, and that is why the Yamana have always kept it up!" It is only on an extraordinarily cold day that a woman will sometimes omit it (132). When the ablutions are over, the child is

132. Hyades (g):193 confirms that for several days the young mother takes at least one bath a day, unless the weather is unusually cold. For example, the woman mentioned above did not go into the water on the fourth day "because of the cold, the Fuegians say. It is, as a matter of fact, the coldest day of the year (-7.5°), and a thick blanket of snow covers the ground" /translated from French/.

nursed for the first time. After that the mother rests for a while; sometimes she herself undertakes to clean the hut and set it in order.

All traces of the delivery are destroyed in the fire. A stillborn or aborted child is regularly destroyed in a blaze outside the dwelling.

/709 cont./

The Yamana say that the reason for the rare cases of premature birth is great carelessness on the part of the pregnant woman in running and working or a heavy blow and shock /710/ in falling. We have already mentioned on page 481 when and how voluntary abortion is practiced. A defective baby is immediately destroyed by the mother (133). A crippled child, unfit for life, who is born alive is

133. The following description by Bridges (1):21 fin here: "Unnatural births were always destroyed and wisely so. For unimportant defects, or such as proved themselves afterwards as for instance deafness, no one was destroyed but only for enormities" /cited in English/.

not killed, but they consciously devote less attention to caring for him, hoping that he will soon die. Such an unfortunate creature is not directly exposed to danger or hunger, but inconspicuously and purposely neglected.

Without exception the Fuegian women who have been confined permit themselves only a short rest, one day at the most (134).

134. Hahn (2):307 confirms that the young mother "resumes her work the same day" /translated from French/. It is well known that the Selk'nam women are also capable of this (Vol. I, 366).

They feel no need for it, and furthermore they are told that they should move about and be active as soon as possible. Since giving birth does not cause Indian women any difficulties, it occasionally happens that a woman in an advanced state of pregnancy has her child while at work. For example, she might go into a nearby thicket to gather wood and reappear in her hut after about three hours displaying her newborn baby. Only a few years ago in Puerto Harberton an Indian woman went into the large woodshed of the farm there. After a good two hours she returned to her family, holding a bundle of wood in one arm and, in the other, the child

/710 cont./

to whom she had meanwhile given life without any outside help. In July, 1923, Fred Lawrence told me of another Indian woman who recently had her child as she was fetching water. She called two women to help, and they attended her there on the bank of the brook. Afterward they all went to her hut with the newborn baby (138). Finally, as we have already mentioned (p. 501), her

> 138. Segregnini (x).166 himself saw Indian women "a quarter of an hour after the event going about their work of sewing, gathering shellfish, lifting loads, as though nothing had happened" /translated from Spanish/. Bove (x).116 reports in a similar vein, and Bridges (x).183 adds: "The mother almost directly after her child's birth resumes her various duties of fishing in the canoe, gathering shell-fish, fetching water, etc." /cited in English/.

own husband must help the woman somewhat if delivery takes place in the canoe and there is no female attendant.

As on the day of confinement, there are similar rules of abstinence for both parents on the subsequent days. The rules we have just listed (p. 503) must be conscientiously observed until the child's umbilical cord drops off, even for a period of three months if a couple is having the first child. In fact, the parents may eat certain fish only after the child has entered its third year. They are permitted these and other things sooner, however, if the pikeman, with the power peculiar to him, has removed the "veil" from them /711/ He must do this separately for each pair of parents. During these days coconuts are practically the only food for father and mother (p. 503). Other travelers have neither observed the customs nor understood it as such. Bridges (x).183 reports merely: "The mother and father of a newly born child are called pimbilma. They are both careful as regards their food, thinking some kinds are hurtful to the child. They generally also keep quiet for a week or two after the child's birth" /cited in English/(138).

138. Helm (x).606 writes: "After the confinement,

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• 196. the mother...covers the period of 'ginkara,' which lasts five to six months and during which she submits to a special regime and does not have relations with her husband...She is also 'ginkara,' but to a lesser degree than the mother" /translated from French/. This description is accurate if we reduce the period to two months. Levinson (B):160 refers in a general way to a food taboo for the women on special occasions. Marshall:197 correctly says, "the parents, after the birth of the infant, abstain from certain foods which could adversely influence its health" /translated from French/.

Wiegbank:42, also, and with him Marshall:198 point to the duty of abstinence from certain foods, but I was unable to check the accuracy of this: "It is customary for the mother to bathe in the sea before eating certain foods" /translated from Spanish/. I only know that for a few days after confinement the young mother must bathe in the sea (p. 200). The husband avoids sexual intercourse with his wife, at least during the first six weeks after her confinement, the majority of the men even somewhat longer (197).

197. I read Cooper's:110 assertion to my informants, namely, that "a Telugu mother must abstain from marital intercourse for five or six months" /cited in English/. They laughed heartily over this. Fred Lawrence also contradicted it and pointed out that in some families children are 11 or 12 months apart.

It is extraordinarily strange that among the Yanaoa there are rules for a man's childbed, of which I did not discover a trace among their two neighbors. There are references to this custom in Despard (B):438 and in Bridges. The former mentions: "The

/711 cont./

people have an idea that if the father sin not still for three days after the birth of his infant, it will not survive" /cited in English/. On August 16, 1865, Bridges wrote: "It is considered by them proper that a man whose wife has lately given birth to a child should abstain from throwing stones, either by hand, or by sling, at birds" /cited in English/ (VSA:XII,273;1865). If he should do this, his child would become bald, as we learned. A man who has just become a father stays in his hut all day and abstains from the foods that are forbidden. He eats very moderately and abstains from his customary work. Although he does not pretend to be sick, nevertheless he is relieved of his daily duties and squats idly beside the fire. Neighbors and relatives provide food for him and his family since they require little during these days. The man truly acts as though his being away from the hut and the exertion of any kind of work would seriously endanger him and his family. He /712/ does not do anything directly for the newborn child; it is left entirely to the mother. He observes the accepted rules "because from olden times that is the way it must be, and otherwise the child would be unhappy or deformed!" As much as possible, of course, the family also avoids distant and taxing canoe trips, probably also in order to protect the newborn baby as much as possible. The father may use his hands, but not tools and weapons.

Since the men enjoy working, they resume their daily occupations soon after the birth of their second and each subsequent child, but just to make sure, they have a yékamuf exorcise all evil. In the case of the first child every man very closely observes the prescribed rules. An occasional idler takes the birth of a subsequent child as an excuse and considers only himself for an unduly long time, to the disadvantage of his family and the chagrin of the neighborhood. The neighbors, however, do not curtail their help, but continue to give it out of sympathy for the mother, since no one feels any responsibility to support a negligent man taking his ease. Although he pretends and consoles himself with the illusion that he is obeying the strict regulation, his neighbors have a different opinion. Caldemm was a horrible example of this so-called obedience to the regulations. He concealed his laziness under the pretense of shielding the baby from harm. He was 28 years old and already had seven children; after the birth of each of them he continued his idle ways for several weeks to such an extent that the other families talked about it very disparagingly.

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846 In contrast to the dutiful inactivity of the father immediately after the birth of the child is the industry that every young mother must pursue. The woman who is giving birth for the first time may permit herself some rest for a few hours, but after that she, too, must do what mothers of several children do automatically, namely, busy herself briskly and assiduously in her household. It is said: "That is good for mother and child!" For a few days she must be very reserved; she must act withdrawn and thoughtful, speak little, keep her eyes fixed to the ground when she walks, as though in mental concentration, and avoid visits to other huts. Older women anxiously watch over and care for a woman who has just had her first child so that she does not thoughtlessly offend against the ancient regulations and thus make her child unhappy. Other mothers, after a confinement late in life, are assisted in their daily work by their daughters. Even today, parents are very punctilious about observing the regulations pertaining to the first few days after confinement (138). During this time they are referred

138. Hahn (a):806 reports a few special details: "The Indians say that a throat ailment will kill the babies whose parents have not obeyed the laws of the 'gimbana:' If they eat crabs, the children will have a mouth inflammation (or something similar)" /translated from French/.

to by the designation given above (p. 505), yembéna, according to BD:649, "the state of having a young child or offspring /713/ (used specially of women and men, but also of animals), referring to the time when the child is weak and requires constant attention" /cited in English/. The Fuegians live in the firm conviction that all warnings and threats are sooner or later realized if the parents are guilty of transgressions against the existing rules of conduct.

608 We have earlier (p. 500) emphasized clearly enough the difference between the actual midwife and what I call the adopted or foster mother. In August, 1923, Nelly and Mary told me in detail about this arrangement. Among the Yamana it is the custom that a woman who is a friend of the expectant mother takes charge

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827 833 one of the few days when she is not nursing her child (154), some-

154. Contrary to certain illusions that sexual intercourse ceases until after the last child has been weaned, Hyades (q):195 establishes in detail "that from the second month after confinement, intercourse is resumed between the spouses" /translated from French/. There may be other reasons why sometimes, not "often," as Hahn (a):905 writes, "several years go by between the first pregnancy and the next" /translated from French/.

times even during the third month after confinement.

• 846 On page 501 we described how the baby's umbilical cord is tied by the Fuegians. The mother is very careful about the umbilical cord so that it does not break off prematurely. In the case of a woman who had been delivered, Hyades (q):194 observed on the third day: "The cord is dried and no longer held to the umbilicus except by a thread-like stalk. The mother has tied it today at its free end with a bit of thread, the other end of which is attached to a little band of fabric fastened around the right leg of the child" /translated from French/. During the night of the third to fourth day, the umbilical cord dropped off, and when Hyades, who had requested it, asked about it, he was told that it had been thrown into the fire. This, in my opinion, was only an excuse to put him off, for, as a rule, every mother catches the umbilical cord, kúfu, when it falls off, wraps it around her finger, keeps it for a few days until it is dry, and then hangs this ringlet on a necklace so that she will not lose it. It is not exactly customary to display the umbilical cord conspicuously, but if the mother wears a necklace containing the ringlet no one seems surprised. /722/ The mother fastens the insignificant little thing to a necklace, which she most safely keeps in her leather bag, chiefly so that she will not lose it (155). When the child is about four years old, he must

155. Among the Halakwulup there is a custom that the father wears the umbilical cord of his most recent child on a string around his neck

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•846 where it can be easily seen. It is supposed to remind him that mother and child still need special consideration.

catch the little tree runner, tšičkášina (Aphrastura spinicauda), which often visits the dwelling out of curiosity. The mother then gives the child its own umbilical cord, and it must put this little ring around the neck of the bird, which flies away with it. This custom is meant to show everyone with what love and care the mother can keep such an intimate little thing and that therefore she is capable of lavishing incomparably more care and attachment on the child itself (156).

[771] 156. I pointed out an almost identical custom among the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 377).

856 The women of the Cape Horn Archipelago, like the Selk'nam women (Vol. I, 372), give their newborn babies a sort of stroking treatment. They call it wíla, meaning "to form the body of the child." From the first day they strive to give the child a beautiful, well-proportioned form by stretching out and adjusting the limbs and by stroking and gently massaging the entire body. Almost any woman, but usually the adopted mother (p. 512), puts the various parts of arms and legs into position, strokes them lengthwise, gives them direction, puts the little body and head level, and, as it were, models the whole figure. The other part of the treatment consists of a gentle stroking of the individual areas of the body with the woman's flattened hand, without actually massaging. In long sweeps, the woman strokes the arms and legs, presses all around the joints with the palm of her hand, rubs all sides of the torso with a circular motion, and finally takes the little head in her cupped, ceaselessly stroking hands. Furthermore she handles the legs and feet, arms and hands, ears and eyelids, lips and chin, neck and nipples as though she were obliged to give all of them definite direction. The woman obviously enjoys this and never tires of repeating this stroking treatment daily. The child's own mother sees to it that it is not omitted a single day if possible, and she herself carries it out again and again if a neighbor or relative is not available to do it. Its purpose is to help the child to grow

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

844 herself and the infant in the sea, and the mother usually took sea baths for some days thereafter. For some time before and after a child's birth the mother and father observed certain food and other taboos. A form of couvade obtained, especially in the case of a first
847 child, the father remaining quiet in the tent and abstaining from most work for some days while relatives and friends supplied the family with necessities. The placenta was burned; the navel cord, dried and kept.

Marital relations were avoided for about 6 weeks or more after
851 delivery. Weaning ordinarily took place after 10 to 15 months, but in some cases not until a good deal later. The child was commonly
855 named after its birthplace.

Education.—Corporal punishment was rare. Severer correction
861 was ordinarily verbal, or else took the form of sending the child out of the hut for the day. A great deal of moralizing counsel was given the growing child by elders, counsel not always received with eager alertness by him, to judge from one of the instructions stressed in the initiation rite; viz, to listen attentively to what his elders told him even when the sermon was long drawn out. The sexes were kept separated after about the 7th year.

841 Girls' puberty observances.—At her first menses, the girl fasted,
881 eating little or nothing, for 3 days. Both cheeks from the eyes down were painted with red radiating streaks. Older women gave her much moral counsel. On the 9th or 10th day she bathed and washed in the sea. At the end, a feast was given to all the members of the group.

881 The tēkwan initiation rite.—This rite (Koppers, 1924, pp. 45-95; Gusinde, 1937, pp. 805-961), for both boys and girls together, and actively participated in by all their elders who had previously been initiated, was the most important native ceremony, the focal point, in a sense, of their religious life, a dynamic stay of social order and solidarity. It was likewise an intensive training course, constituting the climactic event in the native educational system.

This initiation rite, the tēkwan, under the auspices, it seems, of the local group, rather than of the dialectic division or whole Yahgan tribe, was held not at stated seasons or intervals, but as need or occasion arose, yearly or more or less often than yearly. It could last from several days to several months. The candidates were boys and girls who had reached puberty.

The chosen officers in charge of the rite were a leader, a mentor,
846 and guards. A special large hut, of oval beehive or conical construction, was used, with simple decorations in the way of red, white, and black painting on the framework inside and similarly painted oblong boards hung up. Each participant wore a special diademlike feather

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

Among the Yahgan, marriage by capture seems to have been less common than among the Ona. A woman given in marriage by her father against her will soon abandoned the undesired husband. In fact the Yahgan showed a tendency to change husbands and wives not infrequently, which we may term progressive polygamy. According to Rev. Thomas Bridges (1884, p. 206) a man might have from one to four wives at a time, but the number was not fixed by custom.

Infidelity resulted in no fixed form of punishment, but both the offending man and woman were apt to be beaten. Shortly before our arrival a Yahgan man had disappeared. It was rumored that his wife, enraged at his amours, had beaten him with a paddle and accidentally killed him.

Children

In the old days, to judge by the number of deserted orphans set down in the mission records, the Yahgan did not greatly devote themselves to the care of the children. Abortion seems to have been a common practice, and infanticide we judge was not rare. To reach the facts is somewhat difficult because early explorers did not have sufficient knowledge to describe such practices, and the mission contact soon put an end to them or drove them under cover.

Soon after birth had taken place the Yahgan mother bathed in the sea and the new-born child was also immersed in order to toughen it. This was a rather terrible ordeal for an infant, for the sea temperatures of winter and summer range from 40° to 56° Fahrenheit, while the air at best could be described as no warmer than temperate. We have no figures to show what mortality this custom entailed, yet cannot but believe that soon after birth all but the most vigorous and robust infants were thus ruthlessly eliminated.

After delivery, not only the mother but the father as well was expected to rest for a week or more. In this custom we see incipient couvade.

Games and Amusements

The Yahgan to pass the time indulged in various simple games and in singing and dancing. Of necessity the young boys devoted much care and time to practice with spear, bow and arrow, sling, and stones; but while these exercises often assumed the form of